

Message from Commissioner Nancy Navarretta



As summer begins to slowly fade into the rearview mirror, we close the month of August with an important observance leading into September, during which National Recovery Month is observed. On August 31 at noon, we will hold an International Overdose Day remembrance event in Hartford to honor those who have lost their lives to an overdose and acknowledge the grief and loss felt by families and friends. Overdose Awareness Day also provides an opportunity for us to raise awareness around substance use disorder and break down the stigma that often prevents those who need help from seeking treatment. So please join us at the Connecticut State Capitol on the 31st, we will have special guests, mobile harm reduction vans, resource tables, and much more.

As we remember those we have lost, I want us to also remember those who are living in recovery, and the part that we all play in the many pathways to recovery. We all have a role in keeping our communities healthy and safe. In this newsletter, we share information about statewide harm reduction resources, including the Mobile Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) vans. We also highlight the new One Pill Can Kill campaign, as well as the work of The Hub, our Region 1 Regional Behavioral Health Action Organization (RBHAO) in southwestern Connecticut. As always, please feel free to get in touch with comments and suggestions. I hope to see you on the 31st.



International Overdose Awareness Day – August 31, 2022

DMHAS will hold a remembrance event on the grounds of the Connecticut State Capitol on Wednesday, August 31, 2022, [International Overdose Awareness Day](#). This day marks the world's largest annual campaign to raise awareness of overdoses, reduce the stigma of drug-related death and, along with the families and friends left behind, remember those who have died.

Elected officials, local community providers and advocates will come together to participate in the event. A press conference featuring individuals with lived experience and other stakeholders will be held.

This is an opportunity for our community to stand together to honor individuals who have lost their life to an overdose and to acknowledge the grief and loss felt by families and friends. At the same time, we come together to offer hope to those still suffering and spread the message that overdose is preventable and recovery is possible.

Please consider joining us on August 31. For more information, please contact DMHAS Public Information Officer, [Art Mongillo](#).





National Conference on Gambling Addiction & Responsible Gambling 2022

Better Together: Advocacy, Awareness & Assistance

June 8-9 ★ Digital Symposium

July 20-23 ★ Main Conference & Workshops



The [National Council on Problem Gambling](#) hosts one of the oldest and largest [national conferences](#) that brings together attendees from all facets of healthcare, research, government and the gambling industry. The conference features national and international experts as speakers, as well as those who work on state and community levels. The conference is a unique resource for those who work in these fields, including people in recovery. Providing both detailed in-depth knowledge and cross-training opportunities, the conference is an opportunity to build community among those working to combat problem and disordered gambling across the world.

The theme of this year's conference was "Better Together: Advocacy, Awareness & Assistance." Staff from the [DMHAS Problem Gambling Services \(PGS\)](#) division, along with statewide [Regional Gambling Awareness Team](#) coordinators, Bettor Choice treatment providers, DiGIn treatment providers, and members from the industry attended, volunteered, networked, and presented during this three-day event. PGS staff presented on the Inclusion of Gambling Awareness in the [Fox 61 Student News](#) Program, Ethics Is Not a Game, and Changing Gambling Consultation from a Meeting to a Learning Community. All who attended the conference in Boston returned with new information, resources, contacts, and innovative programs to enhance problem gambling awareness efforts in Connecticut.



The DMHAS Problem Gambling Services Team



Kelly Leppard, PGS Prevention Services Coordinator presented with Kaitlin Brown, Director of Programs & Services, from the CT Council on Problem Gambling



August 21st will now be recognized as Fentanyl Awareness Day. As overdose deaths across the country reach a devastating new height, claiming a new victim every five minutes, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has revealed that criminal drug networks are harnessing social media platforms to bring drugs laced with fentanyl and fake prescription pills into American homes with one click on a smartphone. The anonymity and accessibility of social media apps have given these networks a direct pipeline to push deadly drugs into communities across the nation.

DEA officials warn that criminal drug networks in Mexico are mass-producing deadly fentanyl and fentanyl-laced fake prescription pills, using chemicals sourced largely from China. These fake prescription pills are designed to appear nearly identical to legitimate prescriptions—such as Oxycontin®, Percocet®, Vicodin®, Adderall®, Xanax® and other medicines—and have been found in every state in the country.

The DEA has launched the One Pill Can Kill campaign to inform the American public of the dangers of fake prescription pills. The only safe prescription medications are ones prescribed by a trusted medical professional that you get from a licensed pharmacist. All other pills are unsafe and potentially deadly. For more information, visit dea.gov/onepill.



Provider Spotlight: **Giovanna Mozzo, MSW, Director, The Hub**



Giovanna is a social worker and substance misuse prevention professional who has been in the prevention field for the last 7 years. She has 22 years of experience in social work, including 7 years with the Department of Social Services and 6 years at Chapel Haven. In her current role, she manages the state's DMHAS-funded Region 1 Regional Behavioral Health Action Organization (RBHAO) in southwestern Connecticut. An RBHAO is a strategic partner and resource for the region, supporting and coordinating initiatives related to mental health, suicide, substance use, and problem gambling in prevention, treatment and recovery across all ages.

[Click to visit The Hub's website](#)

What do you love most about your job?

I love being part of a non-profit organization. The work is *never* boring and every day we are doing something new. The different DMHAS-funded initiatives allow us to continue to learn and be engaged in a variety of behavioral health topics. Our collaboration with DMHAS' Prevention Division and community partners has been essential in learning and guiding the work we do.

Are there any challenges?

The RBHAO is responsible for a wide variety of work and, at times, it can be challenging because priorities can change by the second. Sometimes, it can almost feel like we are on a roller coaster. This work requires active participation in state, regional and local coalitions, which can occasionally present logistical challenges.

How do you go about coordinating behavioral health initiatives in such a large and diverse area of the state?

The focus of our work comes from our Regional Priority Report, Awareness Days/Weeks/Months and identified concerns from our community providers. By providing our towns with Local Prevention Council and State Opioid Response grant dollars we are able to better coordinate efforts across the region.



The Hub: Behavioral Health Action Organization for Southwestern CT
A division of the Regional Youth Adult Social Action Partnership (RYASAP)
We are open for business!



[Click to view The Hub's Calendar of Events](#)

Mobile Medication-Assisted Treatment & Peer Support

Mobile Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) vans are staffed by a nurse or physician and a peer recovery support counselor. Individuals in withdrawal from opioids or otherwise ready to start treatment can visit the van to receive a prescription for Suboxone to help with cravings and withdrawal symptoms. They will also have immediate access to the peer counselor, a Naloxone overdose reversal kit and other harm reduction supplies, referral to a treatment center, as well as transportation to a pharmacy if needed to fill the prescription. The prescription may also be delivered to the van or to their home, and the initial dosage will be overseen by the prescriber. No medication other than Naloxone is carried in the vehicle or by staff. The service is free and does not require proof of insurance; however, individuals must be over 18 to utilize the service.



[McCall Center](#)
Serving: Torrington



[Liberation Programs](#)
Serving: Bridgeport



[Bridges](#)
Serving: Milford & West Haven



[CT Harm Reduction Alliance](#)
Serving: Hartford, New Haven, Bristol, River Valley



[Perception Programs](#)
Serving: Norwich, Willimantic, Jewett City, Danielson, Putnam, Taftville

[DMHAS Opioid Services](#)

CT HARM REDUCTION RESOURCES

harm reduction

SAVES LIVES

Across the state, Mobile Outreach is available for all of your Harm Reduction needs, with new locations coming soon!

CT Harm Reduction Alliance

www.ghhrc.org

Servicing: Hartford, New Haven, Bristol, River Valley

Bridges

www.bridgesct.org

Servicing: Milford & West Haven

Liberation Programs

www.liberationprograms.org

Servicing: Bridgeport

McCall

www.mccallcenterct.org

Servicing: Torrington

Perceptions

www.perceptionprograms.org

Servicing: Norwich, Willimantic, Jewett City, Danielson, Putnam, Taftville

APEX

www.apexcommunitycare.org

Servicing: Torrington, Winsted, Waterbury, New Milford, Danbury

Yale Community Health Van

www.yale.edu

Servicing: New Haven & Fair Haven

CT Center for Harm Reduction

www.harmreduction-ct.org

Servicing: Hartford



To get trained and to obtain **FREE** Naloxone for you or a loved one, contact your local Regional Behavioral Health Action Organizations (RBHAO) [Naloxone \(ct.gov\)](http://Naloxone.ct.gov)

Region 1: The Hub
www.thehubct.org
475-282-3521

Region 2: APW
www.apw-ct.org
203-736-8566

Region 3: SERAC
www.secracct.org
860-848-2800

Region 4: Amplify
www.amplifyct.org
860-921-8390

Region 5: Western CT
www.WCTCoalition.org
203-743-7741

Organizations can request through DMHAS directly at: [Opioid Services ct.gov](http://OpioidServices.ct.gov)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

24/7 Access Line: 800-563-4086

www.harmreduction.org

[How-Can-we-help.pdf \(ct.gov\)](#)

www.LiveLOUD.org

www.drugfreect.org

[SyringeServicesProgram.pdf \(ct.gov\)](#)

www.norasaves.com

www.smartrecoveryct.org

www.ctclearinghouse.org

www.youthrecoveryct.org